

[2 March, 2007]

RAJYA SABHA

1	2	3	4
20	Orissa	16	1
21	Punjab	8	5
22	Rajasthan	26	—
23	Sikkim	1	—
24	Tamil Nadu	20	—
25	Tripura	3	1
26	Uttar Pradesh	28	1
27	Uttaranchal	33	3
28	West Bengal	12	1
TOTAL:		431	34

Great Indian Bustard

486. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Great Indian Bustard (*Ardeotis Nigriceps*), once the pride of Rajasthan is quickly and quietly sliding closer to extinction;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this endangered resident bird is now rarely seen, that too only in winter seasons;

(c) whether it is also a fact that habitat destruction and half hearted conservation attempts by the State Government are some of the reasons behind the vanishing numbers; and

(d) if so, the steps Government propose to take to save the endangered bird from extinction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b)As reported by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Rajasthan, a decline in the population of the Great Indian Bustard has been observed in some of the natural habitats of Rajasthan. However, the bird can be frequently seen throughout the year in the Desert National Park & Sanctuary and its satellite areas.

(c) The increased biotic pressure, degradation & reduction in natural grassland habitat are the main reasons for the decline in Bustard population in the State.

(d) The important steps taken by the Government to protect the Great Indian Bustard are as follows:

- (i) The Great Indian Bustard (*Ardeotis nigriceps*) is included in the Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby affording them highest degree of protection.
- (ii) The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended and made more stringent. The punishments in cases of offences have been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that are used for committing wildlife offences.
- (iii) The important habitats of Great Indian Bustard have been declared as Wildlife Sanctuaries for protection of the species and its habitat.
- (iv) Financial assistance is provided to the State Governments for protection of the species and its habitats.
- (v) The field staff have been alerted to be on the look for any poaching activity in their jurisdiction.
- (vi) Wide publicity is given on provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 against poaching.
- (vii) A number of enclosures have been made in the Desert National park to provide protection to the species.

Monitoring of drug quality

†487. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any mechanism to monitor the quality and standard of the drugs in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.